Enduring Relationships: Cornerstone of Effective Sustained Engagement in Afghanistan

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ENDURING RELATIONSHIPS: CORNERSTONE OF EFFECTIVE SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

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ABSTRACT

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ENDURING RELATIONSHIPS: CORNERSTONE OF EFFECTIVE SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

> Insurgents hold a distinct advantage in their level of local knowledge. They speak the language, move easily within the society, and are more likely to understand the population's interests…The interconnected, politico-military nature of insurgency and COIN requires immersion in the people and their lives to achieve victory.[1]
>
> —FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency
> December 2006

Enduring relationships with key, credible, and influential local and regional leaders have historically proven to be the cornerstone to effective engagement with the populace of Afghanistan. After more than ten years of operations in Afghanistan, experience shows this to be true for international and coalition leaders at all levels. As the Afghan elders commonly state, the messenger is most often more important that the message. The true heart of the matter at present is not that the United States and its allies have not formed these relationships, but rather that they have not sustained/maintained these relationships for any significant period of time from an Afghan perspective. Fruitful and effective relationships can only be built and cultivated over time and therefore are neither easily nor quickly passed on to incoming leadership.

Leadership at all levels has changed over many times for all countries contributing to the campaign, as well as for many organizations aiding the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA). Unfortunately, given the protracted nature of the insurgency and the continued weakness of GIRoA, many more changeovers will likely occur before any significant change in Afghanistan's stability and development occurs. If indeed, effective counterinsurgency (COIN) requires immersion in the people and their lives to achieve victory, continual rotation of leadership by the

United States and its allies' has hamstrung the greater COIN effort by fostering only a

transient immersion in the Afghan people and their lives.   "Enduring results requires

enduring relationships."[2] As the United States and coalition forces begin conditions-

based transition to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), the United States

should delve deeper into what the requirements of COIN doctrine really are. As forces

draw down, the United States and its allies (a coalition of the willing) will need to

consider developing a new organizational framework that is much more qualitative in its

personnel than quantitative and, most importantly, allows for continuous and sustained

engagement with the Afghan populace through credible and preferably legitimate local

leadership. Experts at all levels agree, from academics to the executive and legislative

branches of the U.S. government, from the strategic to the tactical level of the military—

qualitative changes are necessary and long overdue. These changes will require a

much more robust civilian component, better civilian-military cooperation with an overall

unity of purpose, an international civilian and military leadership cadre of regional

experts with civil affairs experience and an eye toward longer tours that will enable the

establishment of enduring relationships with the Government of the Islamic Republic of

Afghanistan (GIRoA) and with the Afghan leadership down to the village level.

Historical Background and Factors

Approaching Afghanistan from a historical perspective, one quickly gleans how

critical it is to foster relationships with key leaders not only inside, but also outside of

Kabul in order to facilitate governance of the country. The government of Afghanistan in

its current form is a direct reflection of the past. The Constitution of the GIRoA is not

unique in its construct. Miller aptly points out, "the centralized system enshrined in the

Afghan Constitution in 2004 was not an innovation: it was copied almost verbatim from

the Constitution of 1964."[3] In fact, the framers of the Afghan Constitution of 2004 built it

upon the practices of Afghan centralized governments from the previous two centuries

and, as Barfield echoes, "created a government barely distinguishable from the

centralized monarchies and dictatorships that had characterized earlier regimes."[4] In

those systems, the kings appointed provincial governors to facilitate regional

governance not unlike President Karzai does today; however, both Barfield and Miller

point out that, despite this, the kings governed with and through tribal elders. Barfield

goes further to delineate that the "greatest Afghan rulers realized the importance of

consultation and accountability in making appointments, giving both the officials and the

people they administered a vested interest in each other's success."[5] The government

therefore derived its legitimacy from its nurtured relationship with the tribes and through

its recognition of them which gave the tribes influence. "Tribes provided the state with

support, manpower, and cooperation; in return, the state recognized and empowered

certain tribal elites."[6]

    With regional tribal relationships established, the central government in Kabul

rarely interfered with local governance. Village chiefs, tribal elders, religious leaders,

and elite landowners governed Afghan daily life. "The [central] government, if and when

there was one, governed through these institutions and leaders or not at all."[7] Most

local decision-making was done through local jirgas (tribal councils).[8]   Afghan regimes

faltered and tribes revolted when the central government dishonored the relationship

and became too invasive, oppressive, or irreligious.[9] These revolts from central

authority, and the violence that inevitably ensued, shrank the radius of trust for local

Afghans, effectively breaking off the relationship and causing what Van Creveld calls "reprimitivization" or degradation into a tribal society for protection.[10]

The current regime under President Karzai does not enjoy widespread support from Afghan elders or religious leaders as these local indigenous leaders view the central government as "corrupt, illegitimate, and incompetent, which unsurprisingly has fueled the insurgency."[11] President Karzai has failed to foster the relationships needed to empower local leaders. His recent ministerial appointments and sideways movement of inept leaders from one ministry, province, or district to another rather than firing them have continued to fuel this resentment. Tribal elders, religious leaders, and youth leaders have repeatedly and publicly voiced their displeasure with a large majority of President Karzai's appointments in his central government and provincial governors.[12][13]

International Factors Contributing to Relationship Breakdown

In his seminal book, The Sling and the Stone, Thomas X. Hammes rightly criticized the regular, abbreviated turnover of military units and civilian agency employees in counterinsurgency efforts as taking a short term view/approach to such conflicts.[14] The constant and usually rapid turnover of units, and more importantly, the turnover of unit leaders who transact and hold/maintain the relationships, inevitably leads to future difficulties and can stop progress dead in its tracks. This results in what counterinsurgency expert David Kilcullen calls a "rotational disjunction."[15] The sudden change in leadership creates an immediate inconsistency and effectively disables the coalition's ability to act as trust does not yet exist between the new leader and local elders. As the *Commander's Handbook for Strategic Communication* aptly points out, "building relationships to the point of effective engagement and influence usually takes time."[16] The new leader will have little influence as a mediator or honest broker

between the local elders and central government for some months after the turnover until mutual trust is established. "In irregular warfare 'trust is the coin of the realm,' trust drives unity of effort, and we can only conduct responsive operations 'at the speed of trust.'"[17]

Regular turnovers uncouple this trust and also produce the deleterious effect of serving as a constant reminder to local Afghans that coalition forces and development agencies provide only a temporary environment. After decades of uncertainty and violence, this effect has profound impact on the Afghan psyche and therefore affects their behavior and choices.[18] "Community leaders and tribal elders find themselves in a situation of terrifying uncertainty--survival comes through identifying rules they can follow to keep their people safe."[19] These abbreviated turnovers, or from the Afghan perspective "changeovers," commonly produce second and third order effects when new leadership changes plans and programs in place or promised without consultation with their Afghan partners.[20] Due to such actions, Afghan leaders lose confidence that the U.S./coalition will remain committed to any long-term projects or that long term progress for their area can be attained or sustained.

> Inevitably, short-lived agreements on a local level—especially between Western military forces and village elders—can lead to disappointment. And such disappointment on a large scale is one of the most dangerous effects of foreign intervention.[21]

This regular change of direction opens the door to corruption as Afghan elders/leaders adapt to such an unstable, inconsistent environment and simply seek to accomplish what they can to serve their own short-term interests and aspirations.

The problem is further exacerbated due to a multi-national coalition and military-civilian effort of large proportions that is unwieldy and often uncoordinated. To help

better coordinate plans and programs and to better facilitate communication, General

McChrystal, Commander of the International Security Assistance Forces (COMISAF)

published a directive in 2010 appointing Strategic Partners for each of the Afghan

Ministries and Independent Directorates. This directive was carried forward by General

Petraeus and remains in effect under the current COMISAF, General Allen. The

directive helped streamline and coordinate efforts within ISAF, NATO, and to some

extent with coalition embassies; however, the effort did little to alleviate coordination

problems with other stakeholders, such as Non-Governmental Organizations, non-

coalition embassies, private contractors, and numerous federal agencies. The

international community in Afghanistan continues to function mostly on an ad hoc, short-

term basis[22] and remains largely untethered to any specific, complementary, or

integrated objectives other than the objectives of its separate organizations and

agencies. As such, the whole turns out to be smaller than the sum of its parts; in fact, it

is not whole or assembled at all, but simply strewn about like pieces of a puzzle.

<u>Catch-22</u>

Rather than hold elections for governors or local leaders, Afghan President

Karzai appoints them. While Karzai's approach is not without precedent, historically

villagers in Afghanistan have enjoyed virtual autonomy, expecting only security

guarantees from the central government. By appointing local leaders, prone to

corruption, often incompetent, and with no relationship to the population, and by doing

so without consultation,[232425] President Karzai has fostered discontent and local

grievances against his government, thereby giving his enemies an easy avenue of

exploitation against him. Such practices also put U.S./coalition forces and the

international community in an untenable position. By endeavoring to partner with

illegitimate appointed leaders, coalition forces lose credibility (unless these forces succeed in swiftly tempering the corruption and/or train the appointed leaders to become competent administrators and communicators). If U.S./coalition forces and the international community refuse to partner with these appointed leaders, Karzai and GIRoA lose credibility and opponents of the government are emboldened.

In the end, the stance that U.S./coalition forces and the international community take in these circumstances should be based on the needs of the local environment. They should endeavor to bring the central government and local community together through "genuine partnerships with local governments and civil society networks."[26] They should "operate behind the scenes [and] support locally decided initiatives."[27]

As the U.S. and its allies seek to build and maintain enduring relationships with key officials appointed by the central government in Kabul, this pursuit must be done in tandem with a more "bottom-up approach to governance, investing in those local power structures and leaders who best represent local populations."[28][29]

The Insurgents' Power Base—Relationship Domination

The insurgents' power base lies in their ability to coerce the population through the unconcealed threat of military force. Schelling has the most cogent treatise on the utility of this way[30] which he terms to be the power to hurt. His position that "the power to hurt can be counted among the most impressive attributes of military force"[31] is undeniable and readily evidenced in the ability of insurgents in Afghanistan to unabashedly exercise such power. These non-state actors demonstrate daily the power to hurt and use the threat of more to coerce the population into submission, silence, and subservience. The insurgents do so straightforwardly and brutishly. "We have the power. You do not. The corrupt government does not. The inept foreigners do not.

We come and go as we please. They do not. Because we have the power, you will listen to us."[32] More poignantly, the insurgents illustrate their power in their ability to influence elected and appointed officials, effectively reducing officials' access to their constituents, tempering officials' rhetoric, and forcing officials' into inaction, complacency, corruption, and in some cases, treason.[33] The insurgents' power to hurt, therefore, keeps the population disconnected from the government. This disconnection enables the insurgency to then provide substitute governance by providing some of the services the government would normally provide—two prime examples are alternative justice and social assistance.

Although U.S./coalition forces in Afghanistan have much higher potential military force at their disposal, coalition forces cannot bring this force to bear in any decisive manner. Since the conflict is largely carried out in and amongst the population, U.S./coalition forces are constrained by international law and ethics with regard to treatment of noncombatants (rightly so), severely limiting the latent force available in most combat situations.   In stark contrast, unhindered by international law and ethics, the insurgents' power to hurt is, in essence, unconstrained if not increased, and therefore actually of greater influence and utility than that of the coalition forces from the perspective of the populace. The populace is therefore compelled to accept the insurgents' presence and its substitute governance, even if the government has the capability to offer equal or better governance.

In the above illustration, the insurgents' power to hurt is congruent with Nathan's vision of effective military power. "Exploitable military power ought to exist short of massive firepower" and "be recognizable as capable of calling forth large and probable

punishment if it is to be effective."[34] The insurgents' ability to regularly mete out punishment to those who act against their interests makes their power effective and enduring.

"In counterinsurgency, the population is the prize, and protecting and controlling it is the key activity. The war, therefore, is where the people are."[35] The insurgents live among the population. They know the language. They know the leadership hierarchy and interact with these leaders routinely. Being there, as part of the population, gives the insurgent a strategic advantage. The insurgents' ease of communication multiplies that advantage.

Removing the Insurgent Power Base—Provide Enduring Relationships

Kilcullen advocates four operational effects that the Afghan government and/or its partners must achieve in order to provide a consistent and predictable environment: secure the people; separate them from the insurgents; help them choose their local leaders; and connect those leaders to the central government.[36] Achievement of these effects creates the space needed for development to occur. Given that U.S., coalition, and Afghan forces cannot bring their full military force to bear against the insurgents, the key is to reduce and replace the insurgents' power by successively increasing the protection the population, thereby separating them from the insurgents. A fundamental enabler of that protection is the capability to communicate with the population and to actually and intentionally do so regularly. To effectively communicate with the population, Afghan officials and partnered forces must form and maintain enduring relationships with key, credible, and influential voices at all levels. Furthermore, to attack, reduce, and eventually remove the power base of the insurgents, and therefore the insurgents' strategic advantage, partnered forces and Afghan government officials

must be there. Specifically, Afghan officials and partnered forces must establish a presence,[37][38] be visible, actively listen, speak the truth, follow up on legitimate grievances, and most importantly stay there. As Kilcullen argues, "the more organized, locally present, better armed a group is, the more likely it is able to bring…the population the predictability and the order it craves."[39] However, Kilcullen also argues that a persistent presence methodology is not a sustainable long term strategy for counterinsurgent forces.[40] This is true. In the end, local Afghan security forces will be absolutely critical in the pursuit to keep the populace separate from insurgents and on a predictable path to development; however, throughout the insurgent removal and beyond, Afghan officials, appointed and otherwise, together with international partners, must maintain steady-state functioning relationships with key influencers and credible voices in order to achieve unity of purpose, even in a secure environment. "Success depends on the closest possible integration between the military and the non-military actors on the stage if unity of purpose is to be achieved."[41]

Build the Future Framework

Leading Afghanistan analysts, academics, authors and government officials resoundingly agree, civilians need to take the lead in an interagency effort in Afghanistan to facilitate greater local diplomacy and development efforts.[42] The impetus is to create unity of command, purpose, and responsibility to pull together the many actors and agencies the U.S. has operating in Afghanistan, so that the whole of the U.S. effort can then integrate more effectively and efficiently with the greater international and host government effort, as Lieutenant General Shirreff calls for.[43]

Michele Flournoy advocates:

The [U.S.] president should appoint a senior civilian to serve as his special representative, charged with the overall success of the interagency campaign. Together, the special representative and the CJTF would lead an interagency task force (IATF) to integrate U.S. interagency operations in the field…Coalition partners' civilian and military representatives could also be integrated into the task force. [44]

However, she is quick to point out that the civilian appointee would need to have directive authority to integrate military and non-military actors. Colonel Charles Pfaff[45] agrees "[IATF]… cannot realize true unity of purpose because they can only coordinate agencies' voluntary efforts. To make them truly effective, they need directive authority, as well."[46] The President of the United States (POTUS) should provide the basis for that authority through a Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) supported by a vigorous strategic communications campaign to catalyze its implementation.

Grow the Right Force

The Department of Defense (DoD) needs a dedicated specialized force for the Pre-Conflict Prevent Phase and/or the Post Conflict Stability Phase capable of executing the required mission sets and integrating efforts with the interagency and allies. "Military forces must be tailored to and adequate for the mission."[47] Civil Affairs (CA) units are ideally suited for these tasks and missions. The next Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) should capture this force in its recommended force structure along with the major combat elements.

One of the six key mission areas in the current QDR is—succeed in counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism operations.[48] This mission area effectively combines two core mission areas from the 2009 Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review Report (QRM)—Irregular Warfare and Military Support to Stabilization Security, Transition, and Reconstruction.[49] The QRM states that General Purpose

Forces (GPF) will continue to play a leading role in these missions and advocates GPF "will need a greater degree of language and cultural instruction"[50] to execute these missions effectively. The DoD Vision for "Responsibilities for Irregular Warfare and Continued Institutionalization" included in the QRM outlines a departmental goal to "better integrate with interagency partners to leverage all elements of national power to meet national security objectives"[51] and to support maturation of whole-of-government approaches to national security problems by employing integrated, flexible, mutually-supporting interagency capabilities.[52] The Department of State (DOS), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and DoD have formed a Diplomacy, Development, and Defense (3D) planning group[53] to better institutionalize planning and to recommend organization, training, and desired capabilities for these missions. To further implement this vision, DoD also needs to institutionalize the concept in the Active Component (AC) and form a dedicated force to train and equip for this mission set.[54]

Given the focused emphasis on this key mission area, which is population-centric and relies heavily on enabling effective governance and reconstruction, the QDR outlines current efforts for a robust Civil Affairs Expeditionary Force of no less than a brigade in size in the AC. The much-needed and much-requested role such a force can play in the current operational environment, the veritable certainty of its continued role near-term in Afghanistan, and the high likelihood of the long-term continued need of a professional and dedicated Civil Affairs Expeditionary Force, demands its inclusion in the QDR-proposed active component force structure in order to highlight its priority and to assure proper/equitable allocation of resources.[55]

The QDR's focus on providing "more and better key enabling capabilities" in order for U.S. forces to "be able to perform their missions more effectively"[56] is on target and includes improvements in both systems and skills. With regard to skills, the language training detachments that will enable language/cultural skills to be trained and improved in theater need a very high priority. These skill providers are high pay-off for minimal investment and are needed now and for the foreseeable future.

"Enhance linguistic, regional, and cultural ability" is a key QDR initiative[57] that rightly identifies that the language, cultural, and regional expertise required for operations such as partnering with host-nation security forces takes years, not weeks, to develop. The way, and perhaps more importantly where, we train our linguists needs a more modern and more flexible approach coupled with a rapidly adaptive curriculum. As an example, the base curriculum stateside would train the foundational skills of the target language across the linguist force. The in-theater detachments would tailor their curriculum to include current events, colloquialisms, and cultural nuances based on experiences in theater. The forward-deployed training detachments will enable the boots-on-the-ground (BOG) face-to-face enablers critical for counterinsurgency, stability, and counter-terrorist operations and will ensure the locals will not complain in a language our forces do not understand.[58]

To meet this need, the Department of Defense has allocated $33 million to "expand language training centers to fund ten language training detachments to support general purpose forces in ongoing operations" and $14 million for "language, regional expertise, and culture training for special operations forces."[59] Given current fiscal

realities, dollar for dollar, these centers are an extremely cost effective force multiplier that may benefit from further expansion in the near future.

Constraints on manning the force will dramatically challenge U.S. Forces ability to maintain sufficient capacity and capability to address the entire spectrum of threats. Given the necessity to drawdown our forces, the Civil Affairs Expeditionary Force described above cannot add numbers to our forces and will have to draw its numbers out of existing AC forces.

Over the course of the next five years, in accordance with Department of Defense planning, the AC will shed 72 thousand personnel. Our forces will "no longer be sized for large scale, prolonged stability operations." Instead, "certain specialized capabilities, once on the margins, will move to the forefront."[60] In accordance with this plan, the expertise required to stand up the Civil Affairs Expeditionary Force can initially be drawn out of special operations forces and from there expanded and developed to meet operational needs as undermanned and/or underutilized forces are drawn down.

DoD needs to increase our armed forces' ability to succeed in counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism operations by bringing our CA forces to a more advanced state: by creating the separate brigade structure described above; by increasing CA capacity through cooperative measures and training; and through the creation of an integrated interagency database for stability and transition operations.

"There are few cases in which the U.S. Armed Forces would engage in sustained large-scale combat operations without the associated need to assist in the transition to just and stable governance."[61] The QDR appropriately identifies the need to expand CA capacity to meet that need and enhance U.S. Government (USG) efforts to assist

14

partner governments in the areas of "rule of law, governance, public health and welfare, infrastructure, and public education and information."[62]   As DoD increases its CA capacity and seeks to better integrate CA functions with complementary stability operations activities within DoD,[63] it must also better integrate these activities with complementary interagency activities. DoD must break down persistent barriers to cooperation and train DoD units and interagency assets together for 3D operations, much in the same way as the interagency regularly trains together for Federal Disaster Response and Consequence Management Operations; however, such cooperative training exercises should also endeavor to include and integrate international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGO), and U.S. allies. A good example of such international cooperative training was NATO's ARCADE FUSION exercise in November 2009, which "established a unique capability for planning and executing complex integrated operations with other key civilian agencies."[64] These integrated exercises should be conducted annually with National Security Staff oversight.

The enemy is adaptive and situational awareness is paramount in the day-to-day efforts of stability and counterinsurgency operations; therefore, to fully integrate all of these assets, the interagency will need to create and maintain common databases and common reports at all levels of classification for ease of information sharing, pulling, or pushing. Through common interfaces, units, intelligence, and agency assets in theater, as well as stateside, will be able to populate the databases immediately following operations, key leader engagements, and other activities to keep information and intelligence current. Having such a database will allow for real-time networking between

units and assets geographically separated, but operating in the same Area of Responsibility (AOR).

In order to create and sustain the Civil Affairs Expeditionary Force, DoD must provide the people, organizational structure, equipment, and training requirements by establishing this force as a top priority. This priority should, in turn, ensure the needed means to fund it. As shown in Afghanistan, CA forces such as those included in Provincial Reconstruction Teams offer a bona-fide cost savings over large combat units[65] while still providing self-protection and population-centric engagement. Furthermore, CA forces doctrinally have practiced relationships with many U.S. departments and agencies, such as DOS, USAID, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, and Department of Justice.[66] Given this, even as large combat forces draw down, a proportion of those forces could be brought back as CA forces based on the expected cost savings.

This Civil Affairs Expeditionary Force will need a higher headquarters to fully enable its operations. The headquarters would act as the primary integrator and interlocutor with the various domestic, Afghan and international organizations and agencies, as well as the foreign governments likely to be involved in continued stability and development activities in Afghanistan. The higher headquarters would be in Kabul to facilitate direct contact with the central government. It should also have sub-headquarters in the traditional ethnic sub-zones of Afghanistan: Herat, Mazar-i Sharif, Kunduz, and Kandahar, plus the possible addition of Jalalabad. These sub-HQs should be staffed to a level to be able to push out weekly to each province in efforts to remain engaged with key and credible influencers. These staffs would be tied at the hip to the

local government in each area and seek to deconflict and coordinate all programs, reduce corruption, and mediate between the local government, elders, religious leaders, and central government.

Central to the establishment of a presence in these traditional ethnic sub-zones will be the necessity to build train and equip centers for reconstruction and development. Afghans are and have been eager to cooperate in the rebuilding of their country.[67] Unfortunately, only since 2010 have NATO, the International Security Assistance Force, and the international community adopted and "Afghan first" policy for reconstruction and development projects. Under this policy, international assistance seeks to use locally procured goods and services "whenever the acceptable standards for security, quality, price, and reliable supply are met."[68] Regional train and equip centers will provide Afghans the training and expertise needed to qualify for reconstruction and development projects. Interagency strategic partners in conjunction with the Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs should endeavor to create the equivalent of a regional conservation corps for youth[69] in order to employ them in programs immediately afterwards for more hands-on experience and service to their communities. By actively engaging and educating youth, hungry for jobs and self-respect, it provides skills and options. More importantly, it takes them out of the fight.

Given appropriate integration of interagency assets, such a program can be turned into a ground floor to graduate process, and include avenues to further development, such as literacy and private company start-up at the regional and local level. Sustainment will be the goal. Relationships with local elders and officials are critical to enable and maintain this effort. For the locals, the process (the relationships

formed and maintained) will be more important than the product. Local leaders and future entrepreneurs will naturally emerge in the course of this process.

As DoD rebalances the force, its leaders must take into account the lessons of the last 11 years in Iraq and Afghanistan and recognize the importance of CA forces. DoD needs to resource, man, and develop this modern contingency force so that it can both aid in the prevention of conflict in failing states and ensure the more rapid recovery of states post conflict. To meet this need, a Civil Affairs Expeditionary Force should be created and resourced with personnel, equipment, and training that will enable it to deploy rapidly into any theater with appropriate/robust linguistic support and to rapidly network with interagency assets in cooperative efforts. The QDR should include this force in the Force Structure, FY 2016-2020 to solidify its priority as a critical part of the U.S. Armed Forces in the current and future global environment.

<u>Conclusion</u>

Doctrine is always slow to respond and "bureaucratic torpor is its own force of nature."[70] Is there another way to improve stability and development efforts right now while the right task force or separate agency is formed? Looking at the problem through an Afghan lens, there are two things that DoD and the interagency can do immediately.

The first recommendation is the need to change our thinking about how we engage with key and influential Afghans and more importantly, how we manage the requisite relationships over the long-term. Afghans do not enter into functional relationships lightly. Good and effective relationships take time and personal investment. "Trust has to be built up over time. You can't surge trust."[71] One year is barely enough time to establish a sound and trusting relationship, but that is the average length of a coalition key leader's tour in Afghanistan. Rotation of personnel,

while necessary for the home front, is destructive to stability and development, or at the very least is a regular brake to progress and an opportunity for the enemy to exploit. Given this, we must establish longer turnover periods for those coalition leaders who are partnered with Afghan officials, with added emphasis at the regional and local level where units, agencies and organizations implement plans and programs. This turnover should be no less than three months side by side in order for the new leader to firmly establish the new relationship through repeated consultation, active listening, follow-up processes and actions. Both incoming and outgoing leaders must take great care to ensure that all critical relationships are fully turned over and that no previous promises are broken. Broken promises lead to apathy, distrust, and disaffection, all of which destroy hope. Maintaining these relationships—making sure the relationships endure— is the key to the continuity, consistency, and stability that the Afghan populace is seeking.

The second recommendation is a PPD firmly establishing a lead civilian authority, a lead agency, and designated supporting agencies. This directive must go beyond the goals stated in the 2010 Strategic Framework for U.S. Efforts in Afghanistan and assign directive authority and overall responsibility to the lead civilian. In conjunction with the issuance of this directive, POTUS could also issue a call to serve in this lead agency, not unlike President Kennedy when he called upon Americans to join the Peace Corps or to find other ways to "ask what you can do for your country." Perhaps President Karzai could echo this by issuing a call to service to the youth of Afghanistan.

This leads to the final recommendation—the greater international effort needs to focus the lion's share of its effort on the welfare, education, development, and employment of youth in Afghanistan. This is not only because they are the future of Afghanistan, but because youth are the majority in Afghanistan (65%)[72], they are the primary recruiting field for the enemy,[73] and they remain largely disenfranchised from the hierarchical and collective leadership system in Afghanistan. Furthermore, it is youth that are more likely to challenge old norms and practices in an attempt to create a world that better meets their needs.[74] While on the surface this seems to militate against building relationships with local elders, it does not and should not. These youth-focused efforts should provide youth with the tools and knowledge to better serve their country and their people. Furthermore, even in the absence of dramatic social change, these efforts will equip Afghan youth to be better elders and leaders when their opportunities to lead manifest.

We should approach Afghan stability and development focused just as much on the process (*ways*)—the influential relationships formed and the time spent working together—as on the product (*ends*)—the institutions built and the skills and methods taught. To ensure enduring results from our capacity-building efforts in Afghanistan, we will need enduring, reliable, predictable, and respectful relationships with credible and influential Afghans. In essence, the *ways* to get things done in Afghanistan are an *end* in themselves.

<u>Endnotes</u>

[1] U.S. Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, FM 3-24 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, December, 2006), 1-23.

20

[2] Robert M. Hill, "Building Credible Voices: Traditional Communication in Afghanistan" *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 61, (2d quarter 2011): 61.

[3] P. Miller, *Strategies of Statebuilding: Causes of Success and Failure in Armed International Statebuilding Campaigns by Liberal Powers*, Ph.D dissertation (Georgetown University: United States--District of Columbia).

[4] Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), 7.

[5] Ibid., 343.

[6] Miller, *Strategies of Statebuilding*, 324.

[7] Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Its Politics*, (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2002).

[8] Miller, *Strategies of Statebuilding*, 324.

[9] Ibid., 375.

[10] Martin Van Creveld, *Transformation of War* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1991).

[11] David H. Ucko, "Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan: A Concept in Crisis" PRISM 3, No. 1 (December 2011): 11.

[12] Information gathered across Afghanistan at: provincial tribal jirgas hosted by the Afghan Ministry of Border and Tribal Affairs; religious seminars hosted by the Afghan Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs; and youth high council shuras hosted by the Deputy Minister for Youth Affairs (part of the Ministry of Information and Culture). From May 2010 to May 2011, I served as Chief of the Traditional Communication branch with the Headquarters of the International Security Assistance Forces. My deputy and I acted as strategic partners to these ministries and heard these complaints first hand and often.

[13] Elders and religious leaders were very pleased with their governors in Khost, Laghman, Kunar, Bamiyan, and Nimroz during the May 2010 to May 2011 timeframe.

[14] Thomas X. Hammes, Colonel, USMC, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004), 227.

[15] David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 93.

[16] United States Joint Forces Command, *Commander's Handbook for Strategic Communication*, 3d ed. (Suffolk, VA: Doctrine and Education Group, Joint Warfighting Center, 24 June 2010), III-8.

[17] Ibid., III-9. (remarks attributed to Gen Mattis, Commander USJFCOM, at various venues 2008-2009).

[18] Colonel Erik W. Goepner, "Battered Spouse Syndrome: How to Better Understand Afghan Behavior" Military Review 92, no. 1 (January-February 2012): 59, 64.

[19] Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla*, 67.

[20] Robert E. Kemp, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Eastern Afghanistan: Utility as a Strategic Counterinsurgency Tool" *Military Review* 91, no. 5 (September-October 2011): 32-34.

[21] Michael Daxner, "Reclaiming Afghanistan: Moving Toward Nationhood," World Policy Journal 28, no.2 (June 2011): 78.

[22] Miller, *Strategies of Statebuilding*, 345.

[23] Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, 7, 223, 343-347.

[24] David W. Barno and Andrew Exum, "Responsible Transition: Securing U.S. Interests in Afghanistan Beyond 2011" (Washington D.C.: Center for a New American Security, December 2010): 17-20.

[25] Joseph A. L'Etoile. "Transforming the Conflict in Afghanistan" *Prism* 2, No. 4 (September 2011): 12.

[26] Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla*, 15.

[27] Ibid.

[28] David W. Barno and Andrew Exum, "Responsible Transition: Securing U.S. Interests in Afghanistan Beyond 2011" (Washington D.C.: Center for a New American Security, December 2010): 17.

[29] David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 160.

[30] As in ends, ways, and means.

[31] Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 36.

[32] Goepner, "Battered Spouse Syndrome," 62.

[33] See endnote 11.

[34] Nathan, *Soldiers, Statecraft, and History: Coercive Diplomacy and International Order* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers), 163.

[35] Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla*, 73.

[36] Ibid., 93.

[37] Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency*, 35.

[38] Lieutenant General Sir Richard Shirreff, "Unity of Purpose in Hybrid Conflict: Managing the Civilian/Military Disconnect and 'Operationalizing' the Comprehensive Approach," March 23, 2010, www.arrc.nato.int/systems/file_download.ashx?pg=3315&ver=1 (accessed March 8, 2012).

[39] Ibid., 67.

[40] Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla*, 97.

[41] Shirreff, "Unity of Purpose in Hybrid Conflict."

[42] Michele Flournoy, Renanah Miles, Mary Kaldor, Samuel Farr, Larry Goodson, and David Kilcullen to name a few.

[43] Shirreff, "Unity of Purpose in Hybrid Conflict."

[44] Michele A. Flournoy, *"*Nation-Building: Lessons Learned and Unlearned" in *Nation-building*: *Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*, Francis Fukuyama (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 90-91.

[45] Colonel Charles Pfaff is the Chief of International Military Affairs at Army Central Command.

[46] Charles A. Pfaff, "Aligning Means and Ends: Toward a New Way of War" Military Review 91, no.5 (September-October 2011): 82.

[47] Flournoy, "Nation-Building," 91.

[48] Six key mission areas: defend the United States and support civil authorities at home; succeed in counterinsurgency, stability, and counterterrorism operations; build the security capacity of partner states; deter and defeat aggression in anti-access environments; prevent proliferation and counter weapons of mass destruction; and, operate effectively in cyberspace.

[49] Robert M. Gates, *Quadrennial Roles and Missions Review* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 2009), http://www.defense.gov/news/jan2009/qrmfinalreport_v26jan.pdf (accessed 6 February 2012).

[50] Ibid., 12.

[51] Ibid., 10.

[52] Ibid., 31.

[53] The *3D Planning Guide: Diplomacy, Development, Defense* is still a pre-decisional working draft; however, DoD, DOS, and USAID are working together on this effort at present to institutionalize it.

[54] These units currently reside primarily in the Reserve Component and within Special Operations Forces, but not to the scale needed.

[55] If successfully implemented, this force should drastically reduce the workload of major combat forces by dramatically shortening the transition timeframe.

[56] Robert M. Gates, *Quadrennial Defense Review* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 2010), 18, http://www.comw.org/qdr/fulltext/1002QDR2010.pdf (accessed 16 February 2012).

[57] Ibid., 29.

[58] Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency*, 29.

[59] Ibid.

[60] General Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Army, *FY13 Department of Defense Budget before the Senate Armed Services Committee*, 112th Cong., 2nd Sess., February 14, 2012, .

[61] Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report 2010*, 20.

[62] Ibid., 24.

[63] Ibid., 25.

[64] Shirreff, "Unity of Purpose in Hybrid Conflict."

[65] Kemp, "Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Eastern Afghanistan," 31.

[66] Greg Grimes, "Civil Affairs Reset" *Small Wars Journal* (July 22, 2010).

[67] Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, 275.

[68] "NATO Afghan First Policy," April 23, 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_62851.htm (accessed March 12, 2012).

[69] According to the United Nations Development Program, Afghanistan uses the Asian standard for youth—ages 14-30.

[70] Thomas P. M. Barnett*, Blueprint for Action: A Future Worth Creating* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2005), 7.

[71] Admiral Mike Mullen quoted in James G. Stavridis and Bart Howard, "Strengthening the Bridge: Building Partnership Capacity" *Military Review* 90, no. 1 (January-February, 2010): 2.

[72] Hill, "Building Credible Voices," 62. These statistics came from a brief by the UNDP Advisor of the Afghan Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs, as given to the Minister of Information and Culture and Traditional Communication Branch, Headquarters, ISAF.

[73] Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*, 256.

[74] Ibid., 344.